

Economic Health

The following is a list of pertinent existing policies extracted from current community planning documents including the 2005 Missoula County Growth Policy, and the 1998 Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, along with other general issue-based plans (like Transportation and Parks Plans as appropriate). The intent of this list is to provide an abbreviated and consolidated view of existing policies that relate to the focus group topic without necessarily having to sift through numerous plans. It is not an exhaustive list but is a quick reference and a resource. Full documents are available on the City's web site.

Potential Topics associated with the Focus Group theme: Industries, Commerce, Jobs/Wages, Fiscal Sustainability, Technology Infrastructure, Business Support, Entrepreneurism

2005 Missoula County Growth Policy

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principles express broad values or assumptions and provide the context in which planning policy is developed and implemented. The following statements reflect guiding principles adopted by the City and County in planning documents listed above.

3. Economic and social well being is tied to the quality of the natural environment. Long term economic stability and a high quality living environment should not be sacrificed for short-term economic gain.

ECONOMY GOALS

1. Protect and further develop the County's economic base and assure the economic health of the Missoula urban core, smaller communities, and rural areas.
2. Encourage economic development to occur in ways that conserve and enhance natural and human resources.
3. Manage growth to maintain and enhance the economy of Missoula County to support a diverse population, strong community, and healthy environment.

ECONOMY OBJECTIVES

1. Allow for diverse business and employment opportunities and a competitive business climate.
2. Support a stable economy by encouraging "clean" industries that utilize raw materials and diversify demand dependence; concentrating economic expansion on stable industries with long term prospects; encouraging a broad economic base; and encouraging economic expansion that meets residents' needs first.

HOUSING GOALS

1. Achieve the overall mix and placement of housing needed to support a community rich in social, cultural, and economic diversity and an environment rich with natural resources.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES

4. Design and locate homes to minimize impacts on natural resources and the physical environment and to maximize social resources while meeting emerging needs. Locate housing in proximity to physical, technological, social, and economic infrastructure.

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1998 Urban Comprehensive Plan

II. DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

II. A. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

We recognize the role of housing in supporting a combination of low, moderate, and high income households in Missoula County. A primary objective of managing growth is to achieve the overall mix and placement of housing needed to support a community rich in social, cultural, and economic diversity and an environment rich with natural resources.

Guiding Principles:

1. Healthy communities sustain diverse households and a combination of housing alternatives across all economic strata.
2. Housing needs change historically across economic strata; they are different now than in years past.
4. Housing should be located in proximity to physical, technological, social, and economic infrastructure.

Considerations: In determining how best to work through housing issues, we should consider the following:

1. In today's technological world, many people work at home.

II. B. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We recognize the role of a strong, diverse economy in maintaining the overall well-being of Missoula County residents. A primary objective of managing growth is to maintain and enhance the economy of Missoula County to support a diverse population, strong community, and healthy environment.

Guiding Principles:

1. The economic health of Missoula County and the economic health of our multi-county region are mutually dependent.
2. A strong economy is vital to the local tax base which supports most of our public services.
3. Healthy economic development should occur in ways that conserve and enhance our natural and human resources.
4. There is a direct relationship between the incomes of Missoula County residents and their ability to acquire adequate housing.
5. Measures of economic growth include continued diversity as well as improved job opportunities and business expansions.
6. Investments in education and training or retraining pay economic dividends.
7. Both large and small businesses are necessary to the economic health of our community.
8. Business recruitment efforts must be balanced by the careful nurturing and support of our existing businesses.

Considerations: In determining how best to approach economic development opportunities and issues, we should consider the following:

1. Recent technological advances enhance Missoula's status as a place to do business.
2. There is substantial economic value in Missoula County's quality of life (natural open spaces, cultural activities, educational offerings, and relatively low crime rate).
4. There are opportunities for greater connections among the business communities of western Montana.
5. Sustainable economic development depends upon maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for Missoula County residents.

Action: Protect and further develop the County's economic base. To achieve this, we should work in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation, Women's Opportunity and Resource

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Development, Missoula County Trades and Labor, and others to: a) assure the economic health of the Missoula urban core, smaller communities, and rural areas; b) allow for diverse business and employment opportunities and a competitive tax structure; and c) design and implement an efficient regulatory system that is trustworthy, effective, and offers predictability.

The following are related goal excerpts from existing issue-based plans

Long Range Transportation Plan (2012)

- Support economic vitality

Missoula Greater Downtown Master Plan (2009)

The Missoula Greater Downtown Plan is a comprehensive, balanced-center strategy for strengthening and expanding downtown Missoula's role as the economic and cultural heart of the community. The Downtown BID, Missoula Parking Commission, Missoula Redevelopment Agency, Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation, and the Missoula Downtown Association, along with residents, and private property and business owners have significantly contributed to the downtown master planning effort. Ultimately, a plan was created that:

- Reflects and strengthens Missoula's historic character
- Respects the city's Rocky Mountain setting
- Is consistent with the community's economic, sustainability, and cultural values
- Builds on past successful investments

Project Objectives

The following community-created objectives served as touchstones for the development and evaluation of the plan.

Land Use

- Utilize tourism for economic development